

Lionnet, Cornas “Terre Brûlée”

The ancestral home of Syrah, Cornas is one of France's viticultural jewels, its greatest wines combining raw power and mineral-driven elegance like few others in the world. For 450 years, the Lionnet family has farmed this appellation's steep granitic hillsides, and the winery today—run by Corinne Lionnet and her husband Ludovic Izerable—stands as a beacon of old-style Cornas: labor-intensive chemical-free farming of low-yielding old vines; spontaneous fermentation in concrete with no destemming and no temperature control; aging in neutral 600-liter oak demi-muids; and bottling without fining or filtering. Lionnet's wines are unapologetically visceral, stony, and sanguine, offering astonishing power and character and revealing remarkable complexity with age.

“ These wines are beautiful...like Rodin sculptures: a chiseled exterior that gives way to so much soul.

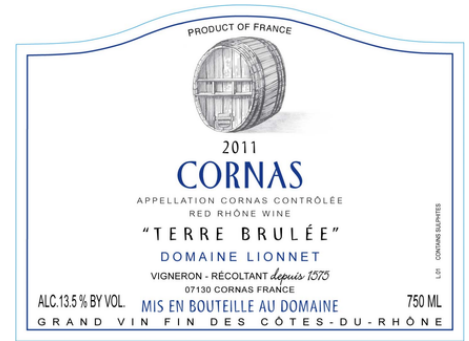
Neal Rosenthal

Winery

The Lionnet family has been farming in Cornas since 1575, and the four-hectare domaine today comprises an impressive array of very old vines in some of the area's greatest sites. In 2003, Corinne Lionnet and her husband Ludovic Izerable—originally from Grenoble—assumed control of the family holdings, and we have witnessed with great delight a steady and remarkable improvement over the ensuing vintages. Ancient vines, rigorous organic viticulture, hands-off cellar work, and age-worthy, terroir-transparent wines make Lionnet one of the most exciting domaines in Cornas today.

Winemaking

Manual harvest; no destemming; pressed using an old-style vertical basket press; spontaneous fermentation in concrete with a 20-day cuvaision; aged two years in neutral 600-liter oak demi-muids; bottled without fining or filtration and with minimal sulfur dioxide.



Wine

“Terre Brûlée” is the estate's flagship cuvée combining very old plantings in several notable Cornas vineyards: Mazards is dark and powerful; Chaillot brings granitic heft and dusty spice; clay-limestone Pied de la Vigne, flanking Chaillot's eastern edge, provides structural rigor; and Combe, the southernmost lieu-dit in the appellation, comprises sandy granite soils which give rounder, more voluptuous fruit and overtly floral aromas. This is a Cornas of immense concentration, deep, meaty aromatics, effusive spiciness, and a bristling tension that is thrilling in its vibrancy.

Vineyards

Region: Northern Rhone

Appellation: AOC Cornas

Soil: Mostly granite, smaller amounts of clay-limestone

Age: Varies from 80, 70, 60, 45, and 4-7 years old.

Vine Yields: 35-40 hl/ha on average

Eco-Practices: Certified organic by Ecocert since 2009 and practicing biodynamic since 2017

Winemaking

Varietals: 100% Syrah

Aging: 124 months in neutral 600-liter demi-muidss